

## The Process

Six years ago the WDNR initiated a number of scientific assessments to provide information for the master planning process on the NHAL. The assessments, including Regional Ecology, Biodiversity, Sustainable Forestry, and Community Restoration and Old Growth, along with the NHAL Biotic Inventory, are now complete.

Two years ago we held an issue forum on forest ecosystems, and then presented the public with a range of land management concept statements. We then took the public feedback we received and combined it with our scientific analyses and the experience of property staff to create more fleshed-out land management alternatives<sup>1</sup>. These alternatives range from an emphasis on early successional species and a younger forest in Alternative 1 to an emphasis on older red and white pine and other forests and old growth in Alternatives 5 and 6. Wild Resources Areas, which have specific restrictions on both land management and recreation, are described in a separate set of alternatives (pages 83-96). Land Management Alternative 6 does include the land management implications of Wild Resources Areas.

In developing the land management alternatives, an integrated team of DNR professionals from Forestry, Wildlife and Endangered Resources described the ecology of different areas on the NHAL. Using information on soils, topography, vegetation, and pre-settlement and current conditions, our scientists developed a map of different ecological units on the NHAL (see the previous page). This information, along with information from the Community Restoration and Old Growth, Biodiversity, and Regional Ecology Assessments and from the Biotic Inventory of the NHAL, were used as a basis for these alternatives.

Two studies, the CROG and Biotic Inventory, ranked the ecological potential of a number of sites. In the CROG, “A” sites present the best quality old growth opportunity, and “C” sites moderate quality. In the Biotic Inventory, the sites range from “High-High” to “Low-Low”, with the first rank indicating the site’s significance within the NHAL, and the second rank indicating its regional significance. Table 1 shows how this information was used in the development of the alternatives.

**Table 1. CROG and Biotic Inventory sites incorporated in each land management alternative.**

	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4	Alternative 5	Alternative 6
<b>CROG</b>	A sites	A sites	A and AB sites	A, AB, and B sites	A, AB, B, BC, and C sites	A, AB, B, BC, and C sites
<b>Biotic Inventory</b>	High-High sites	High-High sites	High-High and High-Medium sites	High-High, High-Medium and Medium-Medium sites	High-High, High-Medium, Medium-Medium, Medium-Low and Low-Low sites	High-High, High-Medium, Medium-Medium, Medium-Low and Low-Low sites

For more information on CROG and Biotic Inventory sites, please consult the NHAL Sourcebook binder (Chapters 7 and 8) or the CROG and Biotic Inventory reports.

In a series of meetings, property staff along with the master planning core team and expanded team met to outline the short term and long term objectives, management prescriptions, and management limitations for each Biotic Inventory/ CROG site and for each ecological landscape unit not part of a CROG/ Biotic Inventory site. This information was collected for each area on the map in all six alternatives. Due to the large amount of information generated, we summarized that data for this alternatives mailing.

In summarizing the collected data, we created 16 categories that describe the future desired condition. CROG sites listed for each alternative in Table A above appear as Old Growth areas. Biotic Inventory sites

<sup>1</sup> The order of Concepts 3 and 5 are switched so that they are now in a progression from Alternative 1 to Alternative 5.